

# Book Your Place Today!

## **TISCUK Training — [Training for Education Settings | Virtual School Kent](#):**

- Senior Leads Training 26th and 27th March OR 18th and 19th June
- Transforming Behaviour Through Trauma-Informed Approaches 31st March
- Diploma in Trauma-Informed Mental Health Schools 11 days starts 16th March

**Click. Book. Secure. Don't miss out.**

11.03.26	North Kent Designated Teacher Update 13:30 @ Riverside Community Centre <a href="#">VSK - Designated Teacher 11th March 2026 Term 4 – Fill in form</a>
12.03.26	West Kent Designated Teacher Update 1pm @ Homewood School <a href="#">VSK WK Designated Teacher Update 12/03/2026 – Fill in form</a>
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30.06.26	East Kent Designated Teacher Forum 13:30 @ Whitstable Youth Hub <a href="#">East Kent Designated Teachers Forum - Booking Form 30th June 2026</a>
01.07.26	North Kent Designated Teacher Update 13:30 @ <a href="#">North Team - Virtual DT briefing - 01 July 2026 -Term 6 – Fill in form</a>
02.07.26	West Kent Designated Teacher Induction 13:00 Online <a href="#">Countywide Virtual Designated Teacher Updates – Fill in form</a>
07.07.26	South Kent Designated Teacher Update / Induction 13:30 @ Smile Centre Whitfield Primary <a href="#">South Kent Designated Teachers Forum - Booking Form Tuesday 7th July 2026 –</a>

# VSK WEEKLY UPDATE

4 February 2026

## Strengthening Our PEPs:

### Key Messages for Designated Teachers and Social Workers

High quality Personal Education Plans (PEPs) remain one of the most effective tools we have for improving the educational experiences and outcomes of children in care. Your work in preparing, contributing to, and leading these meetings ensures that every child's needs are understood, planned for, and monitored.

To support a consistent and robust approach across Kent, please keep the following in mind:

#### ✓ Timeliness matters

PEPs must take place within statutory timeframes and be uploaded promptly onto Liberi. This ensures that education planning remains current and responsive.

#### ✓ Strong preparation leads to strong plans

Designated Teachers should prepare attainment, progress data, attendance, SEND information, and intervention updates in advance. Social Workers should ensure care information is accurate and up to date, including recent changes or factors impacting learning.

#### ✓ The child's voice must be central

Please ensure the young person's views are gathered in a way that suits them and are fully represented in the PEP. Their ambitions, worries, and ideas should shape the targets we set.

#### ✓ PP+ funding requires clear planning and impact tracking

Requests should outline the rationale for interventions, expected outcomes, and how effectiveness will be measured. Regular review is essential to ensure support remains targeted and meaningful.

#### ✓ Use the PEP to drive collaboration

The PEP should reflect the joined up thinking between school, social care, carers, and other professionals. It is the shared roadmap for the term ahead.

### Resource to Support High Quality PEPs

We are pleased to share a new resource designed to support Designated Teachers and Social Workers in understanding a child's learning journey across EYFS, primary and secondary phases.

You can access it here:

☞ [Understanding Your Child's Learning](#)

☞ [Useful PEP Documents](#)

If you require any assistance, please contact our dedicated Kent PEP Team:

📞 03000 415353 | ✉️ [VSKKentPEP@kent.gov.uk](mailto:VSKKentPEP@kent.gov.uk)

## Working with young people affected by parental conflict or separation?

A new programme launching in February will give you a clear, practical referral option.



→ MEET OUR 5 SESSION WORKSHOP SERIES

# WHAT IS YOUR DIRECTION?

In January, Kent County Council and Medway Council commissioned an online programme delivered by [Your Direction](#), part of the Restored Lives charity, to support young people to navigate life at home.

These workshops provide a safe, supportive space where young people can share their experiences and gain 10 life-changing skills to help them cope with what's happening.

To ensure you are fully briefed on the programme, please join one of our upcoming online awareness sessions:

## Session 1 - Thursday 22 January from 3pm to 4pm

## Session 2 - Tuesday 3 February from 3pm to 4pm

Session 3 - Wednesday 11 February from 12:30pm to 1:30pm.

**Please book on to the session you're able to attend using the links above.**

If you have any questions or would like further information before the session, please contact [hello@yourdirection.info](mailto:hello@yourdirection.info) or visit the [Your Direction website](#).

## Do you have EAL children in your school?

There's some great resources on The Bell Foundation's website on how provision for EAL children will be looked at within the new Ofsted framework.

There are also great resources for supporting children and reviewing your whole-school plan. The Foundation have a trauma-informed approach to their support, making it a really useful stop when searching for resources to support unaccompanied asylum seeking children.



## Preparing for Ofsted: Inspection of EAL provision - The Bell Foundation



# #LookCloser: Missing and Exploitation

Monday 2 to Friday 6 March

As part of their work for their award-winning campaign in partnership with the British Transport Police and the National County Lines Coordination Centre, they are offering free online training on **Tuesday 3 March from 10am to 12pm** on 'Missing and Exploitation' for professionals based in the East of England.

## This session aims to equip professionals to:

- Understand the links between missing episodes; child exploitation and abuse; and serious violence; and why all missing episodes should be viewed as safeguarding concerns and indicators of exploitation.
- Consider how to better use available tools to safeguard young people in advance of and following a missing episode, such as:
  - Return Home Interviews (RHIs) and safe and well checks
  - Safety planning, risk assessments and trigger plans
  - Multi-agency panel discussions
  - Disruption powers, including civil orders.
- Build positive relationships with young people to uncover the root causes of missing episodes and address them.
- Use appropriate language when discussing young people who are currently or have previously been missing.
- Explore the disproportionate representation of specific demographic groups among young people who experience missing episodes and how to support them.

**Book your place through Eventbrite**





## Mind are running a FREE Youth Mental Health & Suicide Awareness course

### 9th February and 10th March.

#### **Who is this course for?**

*This course is suitable for anyone who supports, encounters or cares for a young person including health care workers, school staff, family and youth group leaders.*

#### **What will the course cover?**

*During the session, you will learn more about the factors which might affect a young person's mental health including stress and how to help them manage this. We will explore which groups are statistically at greater risk of taking their own life and the relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences, self-harm and suicide.*

*Through group activities and discussions, you will also learn how to identify the warning signs that a young person might be struggling and what might cause them to experience thoughts of taking their own life.*

*We will cover the different levels of suicidal ideation and the tools that can be used to help assess the level of risk and what support is needed. This will include how to create a safety plan with a young person and where to get additional support from locally and nationally.*

#### **How long does it last?**

*The course lasts 2.5 hours and includes videos, activities and group discussions.*

#### **How much does it cost?**

*This course is FREE for anyone who lives or works in Kent and Medway thanks to funding from KCC and Medway Council.*

#### **How is the course delivered?**

*The session is delivered online using Zoom—CLICK THE LINK BELOW:*

## **Suicide Prevention courses – new – Mid Kent Mind**





Canterbury  
Christ Church  
University

## Spring School 2026 at Canterbury Christ Church University

CCCU, the University of Kent, and UCA, in co-ordination with the KMPF, are delighted to open their doors once again to children in care who would be interested in experiencing life as a university student. They will also be supported by student ambassadors throughout the whole event.

Specifically for children in care, this **three-day event** offers students an engaging introduction to university life and the experience of being a student and is free to attend. Students will have the opportunity to visit **Canterbury Christ Church University, the University of Kent, and the University for the Creative Arts** as part of this non-residential programme.

Throughout the event, they will be supported by student ambassadors and take part in activities designed to help them gain a deeper **understanding of university study and student life**.

If you know of any young person for whom this event would be suitable, please complete the application form found on the following webpage:

[Spring School 2026 - Canterbury Christ Church University](#)

If you have any questions regarding the programme, please email [sce@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:sce@canterbury.ac.uk) with 'Spring School' as the subject line.

**Applications close on Sunday the 8th of March.**

**BEMIX is hosting a series of Supported Employment Open Days for young people with learning difficulties and/or autism, and those who support them.**

These events help students, families, and staff understand what a high-quality Supported Internship and Preparation for Employment year looks like, and how it fits into Preparing for Adulthood pathways.

**The Open Days will:**

- Showcase real outcomes from past interns
- Explain the structure and content of the Supported Internship and Preparation for Employment years
- Highlight our job, coaching and employer engagement model
- Provide clear information to support careers guidance and transition planning

**Who it's for:** Students aged 16–24 with an EHCP, parents/carers, careers leads, SENCOs, and SEND teams.

[Click here to book your place or find out more](#)



**bemix**  
**Open Days**

Learn More about our Supported Employment programmes.  
Use the QR code below to review our 2026/27 Prospectus

*"I've been working here for 3 years now and I love it. I've even been promoted!"*

**Sittingbourne**  
11th Feb 2026, 3 - 6 pm  
25th March 2026, 3 - 6 pm  
27th May 2026, 2 - 5 pm

**Medway**  
11th Feb 2026, 3 - 6 pm  
25th March 2026, 3 - 6 pm  
27th May 2026, 2 - 5 pm

**Canterbury**

**Book Your Place**  
You can email us at [referrals@bemix.org](mailto:referrals@bemix.org) or call our team on 01277 374 285 to get your spot today

*Take the next step in shaping their future!*



*"My Supported Internship placement has changed my life. I earn my own money, have friends at work and am so much more confident!"*



## Children's Mental Health Week is next week (9th-15th February).

Place2Be's theme this year is "This Is My Place" focusing on developing the sense of belonging for children and young people and supporting the groups and systems surrounding children. We know that our sense of belonging as individuals, in our friendships, in school, and in communities plays a vital role in our mental health and wellbeing.

To know our place and really feel part of our environment is a basic human need. It can have powerful and long-lasting impacts in lots of areas of our lives, including our physical and mental health, education, employment and relationships. When we feel that we belong, it empowers us to contribute to the world and make a real difference.

Place2Be encourage peers, families, schools and communities to create inclusive and nurturing environments, where children and young people feel they belong and can say "This is My Place".

There are resources and information available for all settings here:

### Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week - Official site



**Thrive** have produced a free downloadable resource pack for schools containing classroom activities and ideas, assembly packs and adaptable session plans to foster children and young people's sense of belonging.

### Thrive Children's Mental Health Week Resources

## YOUNGMINDS

### Young Minds: Support Line for Parents and Carers

There is a dedicated support line for parent's/ carers run by the Young Minds foundation.

This is a place where carers can find support for them whilst they support a Young Person with mental health issues as this can be tough on carers too.

[The Young Minds website](#) also contains lots of useful mental health information that they can access.



## Celebrate those who support our young people

Please take five minutes to recognise the incredible teachers who make a real difference in the lives of our children and young people.

Simply scan the QR code or use the link below to submit a nomination for the **Kent Education Awards 2026**.

### Kent Education Awards 2026 Nomination Form



This guide and toolkit was initially developed by the Virtual School Kent and the Kent Educational Psychology Service. Its aim is to support schools in their understanding of the importance of promoting relational approaches to create a sense of connection, school belonging and with trauma informed practices supporting all vulnerable children, particularly those who may struggle to attend school.

## **Relational Approaches to support School Belonging and Attendance:**

A Guide and Toolkit

Kent County Council  
April 2025



[\*\*Click here\*\*](#)



National Careers Week  
**NCW**

SAVE THE DATE  
FOR #NCW2026



**We'd love to hear from you!**



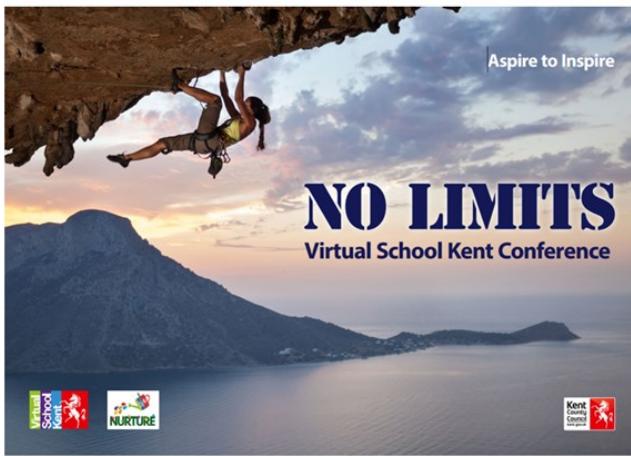
How have VSK supported you or your team recently? Please take a moment to let us know by clicking the link below:

[\*\*Feedback Form: Share how VSK supported you\*\*](#)



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SAVE THE  
DATE  
Wednesday  
7th October  
2026  
10am til 2pm

DETLING SHOWGROUND  
GUEST SPEAKER: ALFIE WATTS –  
Winner of Race Across the World  
This event is for Designated  
Teachers, Senior Leadership  
Teams and the young people they  
support



# Who To Contact



**North Kent Assistant Head:** Jo Hayes - northvsk@kent.gov.uk

**West Kent Assistant Head:** Jen Kemp - westvsk@kent.gov.uk

**South Kent Assistant Head:** Carole Bailey - southvsk@kent.gov.uk

**East Kent Assistant Head:** Simon Fosse-Collins - eastvsk@kent.gov.uk

**Advisory Team Assistant Head:** Emma Wills - vskadvisoryteam@kent.gov.uk

**Post 16 Assistant Head:** Catherine Thompson - 16plusvirtualschools@kent.gov.uk

**Post 16 NEET Team Lead:** Samantha Perrin - 16plusvirtualschools@kent.gov.uk

**Out of County Team Lead:** Amanda Ormond - virtualsschoolkentocc@kent.gov.uk



Instagram [participation\\_team](#)



Facebook [VSK Participation Team](#)



X [@VirtSchl\\_Kent](#)



**VISIT OUR  
WEBSITE**

[Home | Virtual School Kent \(lea.kent.sch.uk\)](#)

<http://kentcarestown.lea.kent.sch.uk>